

CLAIMS

- 1 1. A symbol expansion method comprising:
2 selecting a map portion containing one or more map display symbols on a computer
3 map display; and
4 presenting a symbol expansion display related to the map portion on the computer
5 map display.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the selecting comprises:
2 pointing to a map display symbol with a computer pointing device.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the selecting comprises:
2 selecting a map portion of the computer map display containing the one or more map
3 display symbols with the computer pointing device.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the presenting comprises:
2 relating the one or more map display symbols to one or more map symbol records
3 retained in a computer memory, each containing record components;
4 selecting one or more record components from among the one or more map symbol
5 records; and
6 formatting the one or more record components for the symbol expansion display.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the selecting one or more record components
2 comprises:
3 selecting record graphics components of the one or more map symbol records.
- 1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the selecting one or more record components
2 comprises:
3 selecting record data of the one or more map symbol records.
- 1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the selecting record data comprises:

filtering the record data of the one or more map symbol records to provide symbol expansion data corresponding to a selected record data type.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein filtering the record data comprises:
selecting a record data type selected from the group consisting of a dollar asset range record data type, a friendliness range record data type, a personnel size record data type, a security classification record data type, a type of service record data type, and an age of symbol record data type.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the selecting record data comprises:
filtering the record data of the one or more map symbol records to provide symbol expansion data corresponding to a selected record data range.

10. The method of claim 6, wherein the selecting record data comprises:
algorithmically combining map symbol records to provide symbol expansion data.

11. The method of claim 4, wherein formatting comprises:
providing a list of the symbol expansion graphics, movable by the user on the computer maps display, and associated with the record graphics components of the one or more map symbol records.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein formatting further comprises:
providing a list of the symbol expansion data, movable by the user on the computer maps display, and associated with the record data components of the one or more map symbol records.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein providing a list of symbol expansion data comprises:
providing a user selectable language for the list of symbol expansion data.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein formatting further comprises:

providing a lead line from the map display symbol to the symbol expansion display where the lead line moves in accordance with the position of the symbol expansion display.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein formatting further comprises:
color coding a symbol expansion graphic to indicate an attribute of the object represented by the map display symbol.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein formatting further comprises:
augmenting the symbol expansion display with special identifying characters that indicate when symbol information components have been omitted from the symbol expansion display.

17. A symbol expansion apparatus comprising:
a selection device to select a map portion containing one or more map display symbols on a computer map display; and
a presentation processor that receives information concerning the one or more map display symbols selected by said selecting device and which presents a symbol expansion display related to the map display region on the computer map display.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the for presentation processor comprises:
a computer memory having one or more map symbol records stored therein;
a relation processor which relates the one or more map display symbols to one or more map symbol records retained in the computer memory;
a selector for selecting one or more record components from among the one or more map symbol records; and
a display processor which receives and formats each of the one or more record selected components for the symbol expansion display.

19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the display processor comprises:
means for providing a list of the symbol expansion graphics, movable by the user

3 on the computer maps display, and associated with the record graphics components of the
4 one or more map symbol records.

1 20. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the display processor further comprises:
2 means for providing a list of the symbol expansion data, movable by the user on
3 the computer maps display, and associated with the record data components of the one or
4 more map symbol records.

1 21. The apparatus of Claims 18 wherein the selection device is adapted to select a map
2 portion containing the one or more map display symbols.